

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MANAGU 00175 161906Z
ACTION ARA-14

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O R 161824Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5381
INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE
AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAGUA 0175

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP (TODMAN, TERENCE A.), NU
SUBJECT: TODMAN VISIT

REF: MANAGUA 0061

1. THERE FOLLOW SUGGESTED ADDITIONS TO ARRIVAL STATEMENT AND TALK-
ING POINTS TO INCLUDE OUR REACTIONS AND CONCERNS DERIVING FROM
CHAMORRO ASSASSINATION.

2. ARRIVAL STATEMENT ADDITION:
I COME TO NICARAGUA AT A SAD TIME FOR THE COUNTRY. A GREAT NICARAGUAN
IS GONE. I SHARE WITH THE NICARAGUAN PEOPLE AND THE CHAMORRO FAMILY
THEIR LOSS OF A MAN WHOSE POLITICAL AND MORAL RECTITUDE AND JOURNAL-
ISTIC COURAGE WAS INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED. I WILL PERSONALLY MISS
THE VOICE OF DR. CHAMORRO DURING MY VISIT.

3. TALKING POINT FOR SOMOZA MEETING:
THE EVENTS OF THIS MONTH ARE SERIOUSLY DISTURBING TO US. WE HAD
HOPED THAT POLITICAL DIALOGUE WOULD LEAD TO DECREASING POLITICAL
PASSION AND CONSTRUCTIVE CHANGE FOR THE FUTURE OF NICARAGUA. THE
SENSELESS ASSASSINATION OF DR. CHAMORRO APPEARS TO NOT ONLY HAVE
BEEN A RUPTURE OF THE POLITICAL FABRIC OF THE SOCIETY BUT ALSO TO
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HAVE PUT AN END FOR THE PRESENT TO ANY WILLINGNESS OF THE POLI-
TICAL OPPOSITION TO DIALOGUE WITH THE GOVERNMENT. THIS IS UNFORTUNATE.

IT APPEARS NOW THAT IF CHANGES ARE TO BE MADE WHICH WILL IMPROVE
THE SHORT TERM AND LONG TERM POLITICAL CLIMATE THEY WILL HAVE TO
BE MADE WITHOUT THE BENEFIT OF AN ONGOING DIALOGUE. IT SHOULD BE
HELPFUL, HOWEVER, TO HAVE HAD THE PREPARATIONS FOR THE DIALOGUE PRO-

GRESS FAR ENOUGH TO HAVE ON RECORD THE PRIMARY CONCERNS OF THE POLITICAL OPPOSITION. WE WOULD HOPE THAT THE GOVERNMENT BY ITS ANALYSIS OF THOSE CONCERNS WILL BE ABLE TO FIND INITIATIVES WHICH IT MAY TAKE TO REESTABLISH A CLIMATE IN WHICH DIALOGUE WILL AGAIN BECOME POSSIBLE.

4. TALKING POINT FOR MEETINGS WITH OPPOSITION:

WE BELIEVE THE SENSELESS, BRUTAL ASSASSINATION OF PEDRO JOAQUIN CHAMORRO COULD NOT HAVE OCCURRED AT A WORSE TIME FOR THE POLITICAL FUTURE OF NICARAGUA. WE LOOKED TO THE NATIONAL DIALOGUE MOVEMENT AS AN IMPORTANT TEST OF THE INTENTION OF PRESIDENT SOMOZA TO ALLOW AN OPENING TOWARD GREATER DEMOCRATIZATION. WE WERE WATCHING THAT PROCESS FOR ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR NICARAGUA'S POLITICAL FUTURE AND US-NICARAGUAN RELATIONS. WE CAN UNDERSTAND THE REACTION OF THE OPPOSITION TO THE ASSASSINATION IN BREAKING OFF THE DIALOGUE. HOWEVER, IT NEEDS TO BE MADE CLEAR THAT THE U.S. WILL CONTINUE TO BE CLOSELY WATCHING THE ACTIVITIES OF THE GOVERNMENT AND THE OPPOSITION. WHAT WE WILL BE HOPING TO SEE IS A MATURE, RESPONSIBLE EFFORT TO AVOID A DETERIORATING POLITICAL SITUATION. BOTH THE GOVERNMENT AND THE OPPOSITION HAVE A VERY GREAT RESPONSIBILITY AT THIS CRITICAL POINT IN NICARAGUA'S HISTORY FOR INFLUENCING THE COURSE OF FUTURE EVENTS.

5. A PRESS QUESTION MAY ARISE REGARDING US PREPAREDNESS TO ASSIST IN THE INVESTIGATION OF DR. CHAMORRO'S ASSASSINATION. IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE RESPONSE BE THAT THE U.S. WILL BE WATCHING CLOSELY THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE INVESTIGATION AND STANDS PREPARED TO CONFIDENTIAL

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ASSIST IN ANY WAY POSSIBLE.

6. EMBASSY BELIEVES THERE WILL BE NO EVENTS IN WHICH A TOAST IS APPROPRIATE.
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